

SASQUATCH INVESTIGATIONS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST, 1992

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INTRODUCTION

This report updates my previous findings published in this journal concerning evidence of Sasquatch (Bigfoot), a presumed large, unknown primate in North America (James A. Hewkin, 1991, *Sasquatch Investigations in the Pacific Northwest*, 1991, *Cryptozoology*, Vol. 10: 76–78).

Several short trips were conducted in the Coast Ranges and Cascade Mountains, as well as one 3-day trip to the Blue Mountains of northern Oregon. Three persons were interviewed concerning sightings, none of which were recent observations.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

During March 27–29, Jack Sullivan and I visited the Blue Mountains site where we have periodically uncovered evidence of suspected Sasquatch activity (James A. Hewkin, 1990, *Sasquatch Investigations in Pacific Northwest*, 1990, *Cryptozoology*, Vol. 9: 82–84). Although no fresh sign was detected, we did locate suspected evidence in five locations: 1) an overturned rock; 2) a log with splinter torn off; 3) a stump with bark torn from one side; 4) a torn up log; and 5) a log rolled over. No visible claw or nail marks were found at any of these sites.

Investigating this area since 1986, when a deer hunter reported finding huge tracks in 4 inches (10 cm) of snow (on October 4, 1986), it has been apparent that the deer and elk population in the area is exceptionally reclusive and difficult to observe, regardless of the season.

On June 29, 1992, field activities were conducted with John Green and Jack Sullivan at the Glen Thomas rock pit in the Oregon Cascades, which I discussed some years ago (James A. Hewkin, 1986, *Investigating Sasquatch Evidence in the Pacific Northwest*, *Cryptozoology*, 1986, Vol. 5: 27–37). The purpose of the trip was to record measurements of the pit and the rocks. The pit diameter was measured at 7 to 8 feet (ca. 2.1–2.4 m) across the top, and it tapered to 3.5 feet (1 m) across the bottom. The depth was 5 feet (1.5 m). It should be noted that 25 years had elapsed since the pit was excavated, so there has been some natural displacement of rock. Indeed, on a later trip to the site in October, the pit had caved in considerably on one side, causing a wider configuration and shallower depth.

We weighed the rocks on bathroom scales—with some difficulty due to hazardous footing on loose, irregular, slab-shaped rocks. Of the seven rocks

that were weighed, the smallest was 35 lb (ca. 16 kg), and the largest was 240 lb (ca. 109 kg). The rock measurements were as follows:

Rock size and weight at Glen Thomas Rock Pit (inches and pounds)					
No.	Length	Width	Thickness	Weight	Remarks
1	23"	10"	6"	55 lb	Lying around immediate perimeter of pit
2	14"	10"	3"	35 lb	
3	25"	18"	6"	40 lb	
4	17"	14"	5"	70 lb	Lying 9 feet from pit
5	40"	19"	8"	240 lb	
6	13"	9"	11"	90 lb	
7	27"	18"	6"	130 lb	

Because of footing difficulties, it required two men to handle most of the rocks. In reflecting back on Glen Thomas' account, it is evident that great force would have been required to both free those rocks from crevasses and fissures and to lift them out. The strength of the animal involved had to have been phenomenal.

Measurements of a more recently dug pit, about 30 yards (27 m) from the aforementioned pit, indicated a depth of 3 feet (91 cm) and a 3-foot (91-cm) diameter. Of interest is the observation that it was dug after 1973, the year that I first visited the site and noted only a few rocks pulled out. By the visible slight weathering, this pit appears to be 10 to 16 years old.

In regards to Thomas' observations, one might propose quick success by these animals in locating hibernating rodents, and that this behavior has been established over a long period of time. Credence is given to this proposition by information regarding similar pits located in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest, in the state of Washington. I visited this site on July 7, 1992, with Jack Sullivan and Rip Lytle.

Apparently, these pits were discovered many years ago, and the U.S. Forest Service has maintained a trail to the site, which is designated "Indian Pits." Archaeologists who examined the pits believe that they were excavated by early Indians.

The pits are located in a cluster on a steep-sided ridge that pitches steeply into the Washougal River drainage, a tributary of the Columbia River. Silver Star Mountain, at 4,390 feet (1,335 m) elevation, stands immediately to the north of the site. I counted 15 pits, but I suspect many others are in the vicinity because of extensive talus slopes on adjacent ridges. Rough measurements showed pit depths varying between 1 and 4 feet (30 cm–1.2 m), and diameters varying from 3 to 9 feet (91 cm–2.7 m). Natural rock displacement over a long period of time has obliterated the original sizes. These

rocks were not weighed or measured, but visual evaluation is comparable to the Oregon excavations.

An interview with Gary Wielert, of Scappoose, Oregon, provided some interesting information from the Walla Walla area in 1983, when there was a rash of activity (Grove Krantz, 1983, *Anatomy and Dermatoglyphics of Three Sasquatch Footprints*, *Cryptozoology*, 1983, Vol 2: 53–81). The witness was in an elk camp with four hunting companions discussing the day's hunting experiences when the incident occurred. They were camped at Big Meadows, which is located on a high ridge between the Mill Creek drainage and the Walla Walla North Fork. The hunters noted what was initially thought to be another hunter walking across the meadow toward their camp, but when about 100 yards (ca. 90 m) away, the apparent Sasquatch veered its course back across the meadow.

The animal appeared calm and unconcerned, apparently not recognizing the camp while approaching. Upon reaching the timber, it paused and looked back, then continued into the canyon. It was late in the evening, approaching darkness, and the hunters looked at it through the scopes on their rifles. Not much detail was noted, except that it appeared large, heavy, and dark-colored. There was no investigation or follow-up, and they broke camp the next morning.

An interview with Ernie Fritz, of Ridgefield, Washington, on November 28, 1992, revealed a bizarre incident which had occurred several years before. Fritz has a credible background, including a stint as a merchant marine during World War II, followed by U.S. government service in the Vista Program and the Peace Corps.

His observation of a purported Sasquatch occurred during late August, 1978. At that time, he was operating a small cattle ranch located in extreme northwest Montana, a few miles from the border with Idaho and Canada. He had left the cabin before daylight to hike the 5 miles (8 km) to a fishing area, which contained a series of beaver ponds. At about 4 miles (ca. 6.5 km) out and close to his destination, he paused at the edge of a meadow, a spot where he often had had the opportunity to see deer and moose. Suddenly, a buck deer raced into the meadow toward him and stopped. He had the impression that it had seen him. A moment later, a tremendous scream from the forest completely jolted him, and a huge bipedal animal strode rapidly out of the timber on long legs. It resembled a "long-legged gorilla." It grabbed the deer by the antlers, lifting it straight up, apparently breaking its neck, as there was no struggle. He thought it bit the neck, but he saw no teeth. The animal was growling and looking around; it looked in his direction twice, but Fritz had slumped into tall grass and thought he was well hidden. The animal grabbed the deer by the nose area with one hand, tossed it over its shoulder, and walked back into the timber.

He described the animal as completely hair-covered, including the hands

and feet, but less so on the face area. The witness had a camera with him at the time, but was too frightened to even think about taking a photograph.

After the incident, he decided to resume his trip to the fishing spot, but he did not remain there as long as usual, leaving early enough to return home before dark.

Some readers may be very skeptical of this account, but I am of the opinion that it is a credible report. If true, it provides important information revealing the predatory acumen of the Sasquatch. This report is similar to a previous report of a supposed Sasquatch seizing a fawn (James A. Hewkin, 1991, above). Such reports support the authenticity of several accounts of Sasquatch reportedly stealing deer and elk carcasses from hunter camps, etc.

I also conducted an interview with Dee Hayes, who formerly lived in Texas. She recounted an incident that had occurred early one morning, about 5:30 a.m., in October, 1981, while driving to work, and about 1 mile (1.6 km) from her home in the Sam Houston National Forest. The closest town was Cleveland, just outside the southern boundary of the Forest. There was a double "S" turn on the highway. She had just passed the first "S" and was driving into the second "S" turn when the vehicle headlights showed an animal about 50 yards (45 m) off the road. It was standing erect facing the vehicle, with one arm extended a bit. Its color was brownish. The weather was clear. She stopped the car immediately and looked at it until it smoothly swung a leg around and disappeared into the forest. That evening, she took her husband to the site, and had him stand at the spot to compare the height of tree branches where the animal had stood. Her husband stood 6 feet, 2 inches (ca. 1.83 m) tall. The estimated height of the alleged Sasquatch was 7 to 8 feet (2.1–2.4 m). The only discernible tracks noted were indentations in the mossy ground cover. She also stated that there was another similar sighting report a few miles from there later in the week. She related her experience to only a few friends.

RESULTS

Only scant evidence of undetermined origin was obtained in the field during 1992. However, past sightings by various segments of the public suggest that these unknown animals are frequently seen, but are not reported to the authorities—or get any public attention—at the time. The predatory habits of the Sasquatch are getting into sharper focus. The species is perhaps quite human-like in its opportunistic ways, and probably eats almost anything available.

FUTURE PLANS

Efforts will continue during 1993 to uncover further evidence of these supposed large, unknown primates in the U.S. Pacific Northwest. Field evidence as well as new eyewitness testimony will be sought.